



DIRECT CARE WORKERS

Challenging Careers, Compassionate Hearts

Are You Up to the Challenge?

"The man was there, he was alone, he had nobody, and he was hoping that someone would come."

Milford Evans, Carrboro
on why he became a direct care worker

Who are direct care workers?

- ♥ People dedicated to making daily life easier for those with disabilities or impairments.
- ♥ They may be nurse aides, home health aides, personal attendants or home care aides.
- ♥ They also may be mental health workers, hospice workers, respite care workers, life coaches or medication aides.

What do direct care workers do?

- ♥ They help people with basic life tasks such as bathing, dressing, eating and getting in and out of bed. Some perform more advanced care tasks such as taking vital signs and catheter care.
- ♥ In some settings, they help with home management tasks such as shopping for groceries and preparing meals or they teach skills for independent living.
- ♥ Through their efforts, they help those in their care to maintain as much dignity, independence and quality of life as possible regardless of age or condition.

Where is direct care provided?

- ♥ In a person's home, part time or full time, long term or short term.
- ♥ In nursing homes, assisted living facilities, group homes, day activity centers, mental health facilities, hospitals and other similar settings.

Why take a job in direct care?

- ♥ The job is challenging, yet rewarding, whether you are looking for full-time or part-time work.
- ♥ There is variety and flexibility in work hours, settings and the people you help.
- ♥ You will gain valuable experience for further educational or career pursuits in healthcare or other fields.

Why make a career of direct care?

- ♥ Demand for direct care workers throughout North Carolina will continue to grow as our population ages.
- ♥ Direct care workers are important members of the healthcare team, and they are key in delivering essential long-term care services.
- ♥ There are opportunities for career advancement through additional training and more specialized care responsibilities.

What training, skills and qualities are needed?

- ♥ Training will depend upon the job. It may occur on the job, at a community college or in another setting.
- ♥ Direct care workers must be committed to quality care and willing to be part of a team.
- ♥ Direct care workers also need to be compassionate, patient, flexible, tolerant and good listeners.

How can I learn more about opportunities in direct care?

- ♥ Get on the Web at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/ltc> (click on Workforce Issues)
- ♥ Call: 1-800-662-7030

Funding to print this fact sheet is provided by a three-year Real Choice Systems Change grant made by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to address direct care workforce issues.